

# Tourist operators learn they must work together

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holiday seekers.

But in a presentation to the region's planning and economic development committee last November, Ms McGowan also predicted fierce competition from other destinations, vying for the same jittery travellers.

The department is now awaiting the release this fall of a Statistics Canada report on Canadians' summertime travel patterns. Ms

McGowan said the information will be used to identify and target areas for more intense promotion in the future.

"(The statistics) help us to understand where our visitors are coming from," Ms McGowan said. She is hopeful tourism operators will continue a trend toward working co-operatively to package York Region as a multi-faceted tourist destination.

That approach seems to be working in Georgina, where early indicators point toward a successful

tourist season, according to chamber of commerce president Daniel Girard.

*"We've had visitors from all over the U.S. and Canada. The general consensus is that it has been pretty good."*

Mr. Girard said statistics compiled at the chamber's tourist infor-

mation office indicate visitors came from far and wide to enjoy the town's attractions and proximity to Lake Simcoe.

"We've had visitors from all over the U.S. and Canada," Mr. Girard said.

"The general consensus is that it has been pretty good."

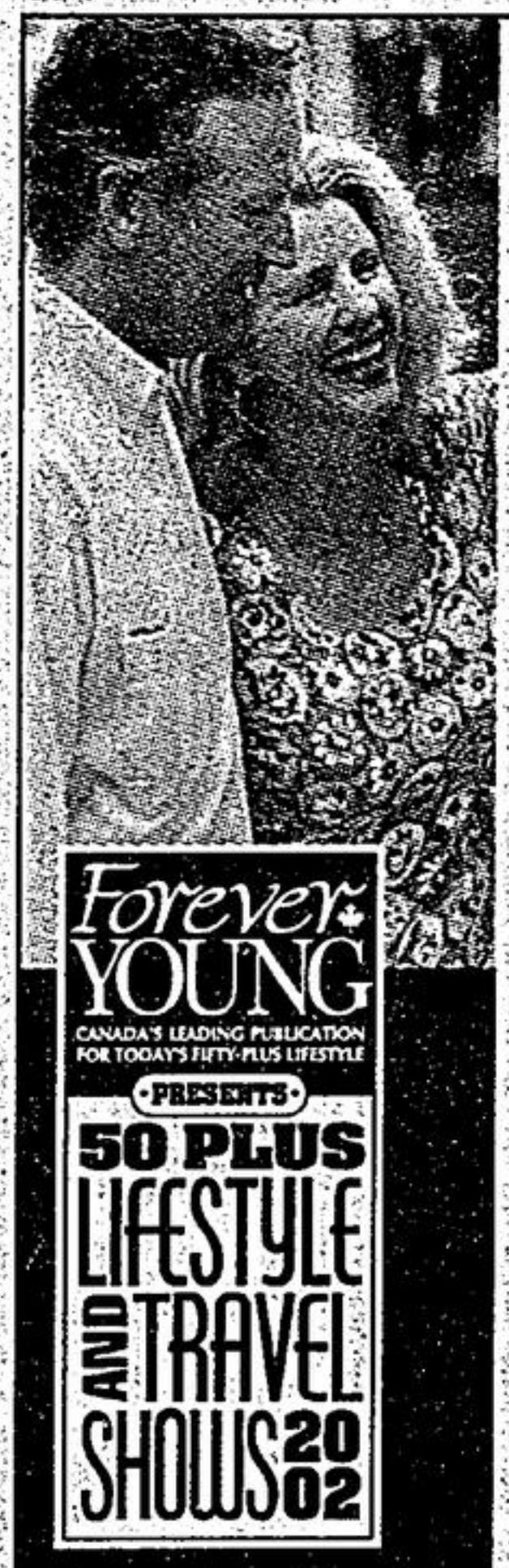
That's welcome news to a community whose economy was ravaged last winter, when mild temperatures all but obliterated the ice fishing season and cancelled the Canadian ice fishing champi-

onship, a huge money-maker for local businesses. It has been estimated as much as \$14 million was lost.

The experience has taught business people not to depend too heavily on one season or event and to try to package promotions and other innovative ideas, Mr. Girard said.

"That's the message we're trying to propagate. We're not in this alone," he said.

"We've got to stand arm in arm and promote the area."



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